GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3359
ANSWERED ON:22.03.2017
Issues Faced by Telecom Consumers
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has floated a new discussion paper seeking clearity on issues faced by the consumers and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether a feedback is sought on consumers problems in case of termination of telecom services and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the TRAI has invited suggestions from telecom companies on the ideal mode of communicating a services closure to subscribers and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) Yes, Madam, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released a "Consultation Paper on Issues related to Closure of Access Services" on 30th November, 2016.The details of issues for consultation, as given in said TRAI consultation paper, are given below-

Q.1 Is there a need for modification of the Unifies Access Service License (UASL) and Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) licences in line with Clause 30.3(b) of Unified License (UL), for those licensees who have liberalized their administratively allocated spectrum?

Q.2 Should discontinuation of services being provided through a particular technology, say Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA), be treated same as discontinuation of any of the service under a Service Authorisation as per Clause 30.3(b) of UL? Please provide details along with justification.

Q.3 What other conditions in these licenses be modified so as to keep pace with the developments? Please justify your answer.

Q.4 Regarding spectrum trading process, the Stakeholders are requested to comment upon the following:
(a) Is there a need to define a time-limit for Department of Telecom (DoT) to take into its records the prior intimation given by Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) regarding the spectrum trading? Please suggest time-lines for different activities within the Spectrum Trading Process.
(b) Should the advance notice period to subscribers' be enhanced from 30 days period to say, 60 days, in case of closure of services so that a subscriber has sufficient time to consume his talktime balance? Please provide justification to your response.

(c) If a TSP is selling its entire spectrum in the Licensed Service Area (LSA) and intends to discontinue its access services being provided to its subscribers, should the TSP give the 60 days' advance notice to Licensor, TRAI and its subscribers, only after the spectrum trading is acknowledged by DoT/ Wireless Planning Commission (WPC) as suggested in Para 23?

(d) Give any other suggestion to improve the existing Spectrum Trading Process.

Q.5 What mechanism should be put in place to ensure that subscribers are informed about the closure of services/change of access technology transparently and effectively by the TSPs? Should TSPs be directed to follow a specified mode of communication(s) as detailed in para 30 for informing subscribers or what could be other mode of communications?

Q.6 Will it be appropriate that the responsibility of verification of time-period elapsed since the last porting (i.e. 90 days period) be shifted from Mobile Number Portability Service Provider (MNPSP) to the Donor Operator so that subscribers' port-out requests are accepted irrespective of his age on network in case of closure of services?

Q.7 In case a TSP changes the access services technology and asks his subscribers to migrate to newer technology, should the tariff protection, carry-over of unused talk-time balance and benefits be extended to such subscribers upon migration to new technology for the contracted period?

Q.8 How much time period should be given to the subscribers to port-out after closure of commercial services i.e. for how long the

system should remain active to facilitate porting? Should the validity of the Unique Porting Code (UPC) in such cases coincide with such time period?

Q.9 What other changes should be made in the Mobile Number Portability (MNP) Regulation to ensure smooth bulk porting-out of the subscribers in the event of closure of access services or change of access technology by any TSP?

Q.10 Will it be appropriate that the change of technology within a licensee (TSP in a given LSA) be removed from the definition of MNP?

Q.11 Is there a need for an alternative mechanism to MNP for bulk transfer of subscribers from one TSP to other TSP(s)? If yes, please give suggestions.

Q.12 Should a TSP be allowed to transfer its subscribers, who have not been able to port-out to other TSPs before closure of service, to another TSP whenever the services being rendered by that TSP are going to be discontinued? What can be associated issues and challenges? Please provide details.

Q.13 If there are any other issues relevant to the subject, stakeholders may submit the same, with proper explanation and justification.

(b) The consultation paper includes detailed questionnaire to find out problems being faced by the consumers and seeks suggestions from all stake-holders for mitigating the problem of the consumers.

(c) The consultation paper sought comments of the stake-holders on the mechanism that should be in place to ensure that subscribers are informed about closure of services.

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